

<p style="" class="MsoNormal">Kamran Rizvi, Navitus
July, 2013</p><p style="" class="MsoNormal"> </p><p style=""></p><p style=""></p><p style=""></p><p></p><p> </p><p></p><p> </p><p class="MsoNormal"><i style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal" mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal">I have often wondered why some people in positions of significant responsibility, whether in government or in business, don't exemplify meaning and greatness.</i> </p><p>You may have come across the question: Are you ready, willing and able? These three words, ♦ready♦, ♦willing♦, and ♦able♦, when lived by an individual make him/her a potent force to be reckoned with. Readiness implies preparedness, and that♦s easy to see; ability is determined by competence needed to effectively deal with a variety of managerial challenges - this is self-evident. However, your willingness is an abstract quality, but one which can be felt by others. Willingness refers to your enthusiasm and eagerness to achieve what you passionately believe in and desire. It♦s your calling from within. </p> <p class="MsoNormal">Such a calling is beautifully expressed by Peter Koestenbaum[1]. He says: </p> <p class="MsoNormal"><i style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal" mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal"> ♦Unless the distant goals of meaning, greatness, and destiny are addressed, we can't make an intelligent decision about what to do tomorrow morning - much less set strategy for a company or for a human life. Nothing is more practical than for people to deepen themselves. The more you understand the human condition, the more effective you are as a businessperson. Human depth makes business sense.</i></p> <p>I have often wondered why some people in positions of significant responsibility, whether in government or in business, don't provide the kind of leadership we expect i.e., leadership that exemplifies meaning and greatness. Many leaders today seem to lack the depth and substance that commands our admiration and respect for them. This becomes painfully apparent when we witness their paralyzing indecision in times of crisis. </p> <p>How we are responding, in our own spheres of influence, to global challenges posed by climate change, growing social injustice, poverty, the AIDS pandemic, presents an alarming picture for us. </p> <p>Why do leaders prefer to sit on the fence even though the stakes are high? There is no better place to commence our search for acquiring greater depth and understanding than a dictionary. I consulted Random House Webster♦s dictionary and looked up the word ♦will♦. Will is the faculty of conscious

and deliberate action; the power of choosing and deciding; and an expression of our purpose or determination; wish or desire.

The degree to which you care for any cause or situation is directly proportional to the intensity of your willingness to lead. An apathetic disposition hardly suits a person who is entrusted with great responsibility. However, caring alone will not do. Your inner calling will be ignited when you exercise your power to make choices, particularly when faced with tough situations.

Leaders face a multitude of dilemmas. For example, what would you do as a CEO, if one of your managers takes you into confidence and admits to embezzling fifty thousand dollars? If the manager had not trusted you, you might never have discovered who committed the act. It was the manager's trust in you that led you to this discovery. Do you keep that bond of confidence and somehow deal with the misdemeanor privately? Or do you report the manager to concerned authorities? In other words, do you uphold the principle of trust or expose the criminal act? By revealing the manager you will send out a signal in your company that trusting does not pay in fact, it can be detrimental to your business. It would breed fear and doubt amongst your people, which is counterproductive to creating an empowered culture based on openness, vital for remaining competitive. You know how bureaucracy in its extreme can make any enterprise unresponsive and slow.

When faced with difficult choices some leaders hope that passage of time will take care of the problem. I recall an incident some years ago, when a bank manager was sitting on a loan application from one of his staff for over a month. On enquiry, he declared smugly, that in time, the applicant will soon realize he does not need the loan! Well, sometimes such a tactic may work, but mostly it doesn't! In fact it's in bad taste, particularly if the need of the applicant is genuine and urgent. In this case the loan applied for was to pay accumulated medical bills of his children.

It is our every day decisions, both tactical and strategic, that mark the trajectory of our life into the future. Even though most of us realize the importance of being decisive in our lives, it becomes exceedingly difficult if you are not clear on your values and purpose.

Richard Branson

[2]

recently wrote in his diary: What are the motives of doing such things? A month ago, I was at an all-time low. I seemed to have run out of a purpose in my life. I'd proved myself in many areas. I'd just turned forty. I was seeking a new challenge. Later he reflected on this entry and remarked, When I re-read what I had written, I realized that as a businessman, I can do a great deal of good. He went on to say, I meet incredible people like Nelson Mandela, world leaders like the Russian premier, and people of vast wealth like Bill Gates and Microsoft's lesser-known co-founder Paul Allen. In fact, people in business and the very wealthy are in a unique position. They can connect with everyone, whether high or low, in any country, through a network of goodwill.

To help you gain further clarity on your purpose, try answering the following questions: What is the meaning of your life? Why do you live? What principles do you stand for? How would you like to be

remembered after you have gone from this world? Your top-of-mind, one line answers to such, seemingly simple questions, will be very revealing. They will help you focus on what it means for you to be alive today and how you see greatness. You will also gain a perspective on how you see your personal destiny. As a result of this kind of reflection, you will find courage and power that will make you decisive - an attractive and an essential quality in a leader.

Intensity for what you care for, gives rise to courage. Courage is the quality of your mind that enables you to face difficulty or danger without fear. Fear can be your worst enemy. It paralyzes you and steals from you your will to lead. You can, therefore, cultivate your will to lead, by overcoming your fears, which are mostly unfounded. Fear of failure, fear of losing face and fear of the unknown are the most common. The good news is that our fears are mostly false. There is a poignant acronym for fear: False Emotions Appear Real. The following case study based on a real event involving a management consultant and his client illustrates the delusive nature of fear.

It was a weekend in 1993 in Karachi. A management consultant was at home skimming a book, History of The Saracens by Prof. Ameer Ali. In it he read about the battles of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had led these famous battles. Badr and Khandaq were won, while Uhud was not! On reflection, the consultant realized that God was conveying an important message through these historic events. The lesson of Uhud was this: That regardless of who is leading you, if you and others in the team are not acting on principles, everyone loses. This is what happened in Uhud. Even though Muslims were well equipped and in sufficient numbers to face their enemy, they did not see victory. Sensing success from the apparent retreat of the enemy, some of the soldiers succumbed to greed. They left their positions, even though they were told not to, and went after the loot. Opponents took advantage of this lapse.

Conversely, Muslims won in Badr and Khandaq because they stood firm on principles even though the odds were great. For instance, in the Battle of Badr, Muslims were heavily outnumbered, and in the Battle of Khandaq, non-Muslim allies reneged in the heat of battle, causing a significant breach in the defenses.

Just as the consultant was reflecting on these historic events, his phone rang. It was the general manager of his client company who wanted to discuss a serious problem, urgently. He had only been in the company for three months when a challenge hit him. The consultant invited the GM over and they got talking.

It is worth bearing in mind that the consultant had carried out a visioning exercise for this client a few months earlier. The intervention had involved all of their two hundred employees in different parts of Pakistan. Outcome of the extensive exercise was a clear vision and mission statement that was known and understood by all in the organization. Values and guiding principles had also been established through consultation. The opening line of the mission statement read, *Seeking Allah's pleasure in all that we do.*

This ambitious claim reflected the aspirations of everyone in the company and was approved by the board.

The GM described the problem thus: His regional manager had threatened to resign if his demand for a higher salary package was not approved. He was heading a team of seventy salespeople, in a highly competitive market, at the height of the sales season. The GM was in no position to justify this increase on account of company policy which was recently formulated

on a participative basis and was seen to be an equitable compensation structure. The GM was afraid that by not acceding to his RM's request, the RM would leave, taking his team with him. His fear was that this would create a huge dent in the sales of the company and budget will not be achieved in his first year at the company.

The consultant invited the GM to share his initial thoughts on this problem. The GM said, "My instinct tells me that I should agree to the RM's terms; start looking for his replacement in secret; as soon as one is found, I'll fire the RM on the spot and instantly install the new person in his place. I'll act with lightening speed so that the RM has no time to think. He will, therefore, be unable to take his team with him!" The consultant probed the GM further, "How would you describe The RM's behavior so far?" The GM replied spontaneously, "Oh! He is clearly blackmailing us!" The consultant enquired: "How would your RM interpret your action, once reality of what you did dawns on him?" The GM stumbled and muttered, "Does it really matter?"

Your inner calling is not divorced from ethical considerations. In this instance, the GM had thought of taking a convenient "tit-for-tat" approach, making him no better than the RM. If you play "chess" with your people, they'll do the same with you! You must not play games with people if you seriously wish to run your business on sustainable lines, based on foundations of trust and integrity.

The consultant reminded the GM of his company's newly adopted mission statement and re-focused his attention on its first line: "Seeking Allah's pleasure in all that we do." The GM's thinking clearly contradicted Allah's pleasure. In light of this, the consultant suggested that if the GM wanted to proceed along the "tit-for-tat" approach, he would be well advised to issue a circular to all staff stating that this line in the mission statement was too much of a burden for the company to live up to in its everyday decision-making, and is henceforth being removed. Thankfully, the GM was unwilling to follow this advice. His reason: "It doesn't feel right!"

On seeing this, the consultant shared the lessons he had learned that very day, from Badr, Ouhd and Khandak, and advised the GM: "Tell your RM plainly and respectfully that you cannot accept his request for higher pay and explain your reasons. The RM would leave the company or stay. That'll be his call. The team will either go with him, or remain with the company. You'll win either way. What's the point of having people on board whom you do not trust? If the team remains, even after the RM's departure, you know you have people you can depend on. If they leave, all the better for you! They will save you from engaging in an expensive witch-hunt to identify and sack disloyal elements. They will simply walk out of your life! And if they do, you will end up having a clean company. In a matter of weeks, a new team can be hired and trained and they will at least deliver 70% of budget this year, and exceed expectations in the years that follow!" And so it was. The GM exercised his own conviction, on sound and principled advice received. The RM left, while his team remained! The GM's fears were unfounded.

Koestenbaum

mce_style="mso-footnote-id:ftn3" href="#_ftn3" mce_href="#_ftn3" name="_ftnref3" title="">[3], in his search for a new language of effective leadership, leaves us with a profound question: ♦How to reconcile the often-brutal realities of business with basic human values in order to create a new language of effective leadership?♦ </p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="margin: 7.5pt 0in; background: none repeat scroll 0% 0% white; vertical-align: top;" mce_style="margin: 7.5pt 0in; background: none repeat scroll 0% 0% white; vertical-align: top;">Your inner calling will be demonstrated by you putting your neck on the line, by you daring to speak from your heart about what you care about deeply, and by you taking responsibility for the outcomes you promise to deliver. </p><p class="MsoNormal" style="margin: 7.5pt 0in; background: none repeat scroll 0% 0% white; vertical-align: top;" mce_style="margin: 7.5pt 0in; background: none repeat scroll 0% 0% white; vertical-align: top;">_____
</p><p></p> <div style="mso-element:footnote-list" mce_style="mso-element:footnote-list"><hr align="left" size="1" width="33%"> <div style="mso-element:footnote" mce_style="mso-element:footnote" id="ftn1"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[1] Koestenbaum is classically trained philosopher with degrees in philosophy, physics, and theology from Stanford, Harvard, and Boston University. This quote was taken from the article, Do You Have The Will To Lead? by Polly Labarre. Published in Fast Company, Issue No. 32. Feb 2000</p> </div> <div style="mso-element:footnote" mce_style="mso-element:footnote" id="ftn2"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[2] From his book: Screw It, Let♦s Do It. (Virgin Books, 2006). P.101</p> </div> <div style="mso-element:footnote" mce_style="mso-element:footnote" id="ftn3"> <p class="MsoFootnoteText">[3] From the article, Do You Have The Will To Lead? by Polly Labarre. Published in Fast Company, Issue No. 32. Feb 2000</p> </div> </div> <p></p><p style=""></p><p style=""></p> </p><p style=""></p><p style=""></p> </p><p></p>

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mce_style="font-size: small;" style="font-size: small;">It is always useful to explore the history
of any company to understand how they got to being what they are today. Corporate success
usually follows some combination of visionary entrepreneurship and luck. When companies
acquire early successes and achieve a dominant position in some market or markets they
become profitable and usually follow a steep growth trajectory in their early years. </p>
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style="font-size: small;">With the passage of time, however, pressures on managers come
mostly from inside the firm. Building and staffing a bureaucracy that can cope with growth is the
biggest challenge. External constituencies are neglected. The firm needs, hires, and promotes
managers, not leaders, to cope with the growing bureaucracy. Top managers allow these
people, not leaders, to become executives. Sometimes top management actively prevents
leaders from becoming senior executives. Managers begin to believe that they are the best and
that idiosyncratic traditions are superior. They tend to become increasingly arrogant and aloof.
The problem is compounded when top management does nothing to stop this trend and often
ends up exacerbating it. </p> <p class="MsoNormal" style=""><span

mce_style="font-size: small;" style="font-size: small;"/> </p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="">A strong, insular and conceited culture develops. Managers fail to acknowledge the value of customers and other key stakeholders. They behave in an inward-looking, sometimes political fashion and fail to acknowledge the value of leadership and the talent available at all levels that can provide it. They tend to stifle initiative and innovation. They behave in centralized and authoritative ways.</p> <p class="MsoNormal"> </p> Consequently, as organizations grow, whether in terms of sales, number of employees, range of products and services, market share, or whatever, they start to lose the advantage they once had. According to John Naisbitt in the book <i style="" mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal">Rethinking the Future</i> ♦ it is the small companies who are creating the global economy, not the Fortune 500. And these days a small company can be as small as one person. ♦ In his book, <i style="" mce_style="mso-bidi-font-style:normal">Megatrends 2000</i> he gave the example of his neighbors Linde and Lito who have a publishing company called Western Eye Press. He continues, ♦ It ♦s just two people and they publish wonderful photographic and guide books. They create them on Macintosh computers in their basement in Telluride. They print out the camera-ready pages on their own high resolution laser printer. Then they FedEx ♦ed these pages to Seoul, South Korea, and the printer there manufactures their books and ships them to distributors all over the world. Western Eye Press is a key player in the global economy and its just two people on this little mountain perch in Colorado. ♦ Large corporations and global conglomerates, if not careful, end up becoming highly bureaucratic, over-managed, rule-driven and inflexible by virtue of their size. In this day and age of cyberspace and nanotechnology, fetish with size of a business can become an impediment. This is particularly true for organizations that have grown significantly in scale in terms of revenues and market share. Organizations like Citibank have lost touch with their core constituents. It may be a major player with a strong brand image, but customers interacting with its frontline employees are often disappointed by their state of helplessness in resolving routine problems. This could be on account of slavish adherence to archaic procedures. Often, individual contributors in big companies don ♦t take the initiative needed to listen and understand customer requirements with the intent to ultimately delighting them. There is a lot to be said for systems and processes, but if they are not customer oriented and responsive, the game is as good as lost. Quality can now be replicated anywhere in the world. China is leading the way in this respect. With the falling of trade barriers and dropping of quotas, the Chinese have taken their global market share in textiles from 16% to over 50% in less than a decade. In recent years, the Pakistan market has been flooded with Chinese products (mostly electronic, light engineering) that are low priced and in much demand. We no longer live in a world of big mainframes. We live in a world where the real power is large networks ♦ a lot of individuals connected together ♦ Facebook & Twitter are pointing the way. A network does not have any headquarters. Chinese excel in this field and have spread their global business through this means. Naisbitt cites Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) as a great example of a huge

company that thrives and grows through networking. He quotes Percy Barnevik (Former CEO at ABB) as having said, ♦We grow all the time, but we also shrink all the time.♦ As the network gets larger, the nodes get smaller. So, no matter how big your company gets, continue to excel by empowering your people at every level to deliver. Building agility and responsiveness is the key.</div>